



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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September 4, 1969

MEMORANDUM TO: The White House - Dr. Henry Kissinger
Chairman, NSC Review Group

FROM: Ronald I. Spiers, Chairman, NSC
Interdepartmental Political-Military Group

SUBJECT: NSSM 59

You established a due date of September 5 for the NSSM 59 study on US Chemical and Biological Warfare policy. On August 22 the IPMG met to commence preparation of the final report. At that time the DOD representative sought, at the request of Secretary Laird, a one month delay in submitting the report (i.e., until October 5) in order to permit DOD to develop a departmental position.

Mr. Halperin, representing your office, thought such a delay would be acceptable but that all agencies involved would have to agree to the delay and also agree not to make public statements that would extend or revise current policies in the interim. No objections were expressed to these qualifications and the tentative agreement at the IPMG meeting was to honor the DOD request subject to confirmation from the agencies involved. However, the State Department representatives pointed out that such a delay could present serious problems in the forthcoming UN General Assembly, which begins meeting September 16.

Subsequent to the IPMG meeting, I checked with the responsible officers in State and ACDA who will be dealing with CBW issues in the forthcoming UNGA meeting. You should be aware that we have a real operational problem in that

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the US will be expected to take positions in the UNGA on resolutions and draft conventions relating to CBW. While we may be able to use procedural devices to maneuver our way through many of the problems until a policy is developed, this is at best a temporary expedient and the absence of a policy will unquestionably make it difficult to obtain results from the General Assembly which are satisfactory from the US point of view. There may also be some Congressional criticism when it becomes known that a delay in completing the study is envisioned.

I conclude, therefore, that while we should agree that the Department of Defense take time to review and develop their position, we should still strive to get NSSM #59 before the NSC as rapidly as feasible.

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